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The Discursive Constructions of Self Positioning amongst Minority Ethnic Patients in a Hospital Ward.

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This paper deals with results from an ongoing research project about how patients and health professionals talk about and enact culture in a specific Danish hospital ward, whether this may have implications for staff - patient relationships and how knowledge of cultural complexities may add value to patient care. The project and this paper are based on a discourse analytic and social constructivist approach, and contrary to some earlier studies focusing on health professionals' perceptions of culture in relation to the care of minority ethnic patients (Dansk Sygeplejeråd 2006; Nielsen, B. 2006; Roberts, C. 2005) this project and paper deal with culture seen from a patient perspective. Data have been collected from interviews with minority ethnic patients and with nurses about the intercultural encounter in an infectious diseases ward, and the analysis focuses on evaluating statements (Martin and White 2005) present in the discourses. The analysis aims at studying how such discourses may display the patients' roles and self positioning, to discuss whether such positions and roles are attributable to culture, language proficiency or social conditions. Furthermore, analysis of the discursive constructions of nurses' perceptions demonstrates both intended perceptions and actual enactments which may, as those of the patients, contribute positively or negatively to care and intercultural complexities in the ward.

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